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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Reptilia, Squamata, Serpentes, Scolecophidia, Anomalepididae, *Liotyphlops* cf. *ternetzii* (Boulenger, 1896): first family record for the state of Ceará, Brazil

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The Scolecophidia is a basal group in the phylogeny of snakes and includes three families of very odd creatures, collectively called Blind Snakes (Greene 1997). The family Anomalepididae (Dawn Blind Snakes) is considered the world's smallest snakes and they are represented currently by four genera comprising 17 species: *Anomalepis* Jan, 1860 (4 ssp.), *Helminthophis* Peters, 1860 (3 ssp.), *Liotyphlops* Peters, 1860 (8 ssp.), and *Typhlophis* Fitzinger, 1843 (2 ssp.) (Uetz et al. 2008), ranging from southern Middle America (Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama) to South America (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay) (Carreira 2004; Freire et al. 2007). *Liotyphlops* is the richest genus in the family with eight species currently recognized: *L. albirostris* (Peters, 1857), *L. anops* (Cope, 1899), *L. argaleus* Dixon and Kofron, 1984, *L. beui* (Amaral, 1924), *L. schubarti* Vanzolini, 1948, *L. ternetzii* (Boulenger, 1896), *L. wilderi* (Garman, 1883), and *L. trefauti* (Freire, Caramaschi and Argôlo, 2007) (Freire et al. op cit.).

During a field survey conducted on 10th July 2008 in the Ubajara National Park a juvenile specimen (total length = 121 mm) of *Liotyphlops* cf. *ternetzii* was collected (Figure 1). The specimens were found in the surroundings of Minas River (03°50'01.9" S, 40°54'15.6" W; 519 m above sea level), an area with a physiognomy of *Caatinga* (*sensu* Ab'Saber 1977). Although the external diagnostic characters analyzed combined with *Liotyphlops ternetzii* (see Dixon and Kofron 1984), I prefer to leave as confer status due to the fact that anomalepidids has a complex taxonomy and it is very difficult to determine precisely the species identification, such as in this case with a single juvenile found over a two years of expedition in the Plateau of Ibiapaba.

The specimen was deposited in the snakes collection of Institute Butantan, São Paulo, Brazil (IBSP 76856). Collecting permits was autorized by Ibama (License # 13571-1).

Figure 1. A juvenile of *Liotyphlops* cf. *ternetzii* (IBSP 76856) collected at Ubajara National Park, municipality of Ubajara, state of Ceará.

Liotyphlops ternetzii was known from the Brazilian states of Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso, Pará, São Paulo, and also for the countries of Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay (Cunha and Nascimento 1993; Carreira 2004; Recorder and Nogueira 2007). This finding represents the first record for the family Anomalepididae in state of Ceará and also the extension of the genus distribution as follows: ca. 720 km E from municipality of Capitão Poço, state of Pará, Brazil (*L. ternetzii*; Cunha and Nascimento 1993), 1,375 km N from the Grande Sertão Veredas National Park, state of Minas Gerais, Brazil (*L. ternetzii*; Recoder and Nogueira 2007), and ca. 780 km NW from municipality of São José da Lage, state of Alagoas, Brazil (*L. trefauti*; Freire et al. 2007).

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Two hypotheses should be considered about the wide and fragmented distribution of *L. ternetzii*, based on available literature. Firstly, it is possible that *L. ternetzii* is, in fact, a complex of species. Second, the fossorial behavior of the species associated with its apparent low density becomes very difficult find these snakes to in the wild and, perhaps, the distribution of the species is not so fragmented as actually considered. Therefore, the best way to try to solve this dilemma definitively is to conduct a taxonomic review for the currently recognized populations of *L. ternetzii*.

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